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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 447-4330

Letter No. 2491

Jan. 18, 1991

NEW FOOD SAFETY PUB -- Because many of the 7 million cases of foodborne illnesses reported each year in the U.S. result from consumers mishandling food after they buy it, USDA has a new publication to help teach consumers how to handle food safely. "A Quick Consumer Guide to Safe Food Handling" is a fold-out booklet that provides do's & don'ts. "According to statistics from the Centers for Disease Control, approximately 85 percent of foodborne illness incidents could be avoided by following safe methods for food handling," says **Lester M. Crawford**, administrator of USDA's Food Safety & Inspection Service. **Contact: Jim Greene (202) 382-0314.**

SPOUSES SEPARATE -- Secretary of Agriculture **Clayton Yeutter** has exercised his discretionary authority under the 1990 Farm Act to allow spouses to be considered as separate people for payment limitation purposes for the 1991 through 1995 crop years. This means spouses will be treated exactly as two siblings who are farming together, Yeutter says. "During the past several years, many farm organizations have brought to my attention the manner in which payment limitations have adversely affected family farms," Yeutter says. "I am going as far as the law will allow me with this decision." **Contact: Bob Feist (202) 447-6789.**

NEW CONSUMER INFO CATALOG -- The Consumer Information Center recently put out its Winter catalog of free and low-cost federal publications. Along with a wealth of other pubs, this issue features booklets on home mortgages, ways to lower auto insurance costs, where to write for vital records & dietary guidelines for Americans. For a copy of the Winter Consumer Information Catalog, contact: **Linda O'Neil (202) 501-1794.**

FOREIGN BIOCONTROL AGENTS HELP -- USDA scientists based in Rome, Italy, are recruiting, testing & shipping special crews of helpful weed-fighting bugs & microorganisms back to the U.S. "The growth in weed biocontrol shipments has been explosive," says **Lloyd Knutson**, director of USDA's Biological Control of Weeds Lab in Rome. In 1980, he says, the Rome lab shipped 2,377 insects & microorganisms of seven weed-attacking species. By 1990, the annual total jumped to 80,175 of 28 species. **Contact: Lloyd Knutson, phone in Rome: 011-39-507-0145.**

GRAZING FEES SET -- As of March 1, USDA's fee for grazing livestock on national forests in 15 Western states will be \$1.97 per head per month -- a 16 cent increase over 1990 levels. The fee is going up, says **F. Dale Robertson**, chief of USDA's Forest Service, because prices farmers & ranchers receive for beef cattle have increased & because private grazing land lease rates have increased. **Contact: Diane Hitchings (202) 475-3778.**

"SILVER MARKET" OPENS -- For a food exporter, targeting sales toward the "silver market" -- the over-60 crowd -- can mean sales opportunities if products are positioned correctly, five U.S. ag attaches & trade officers say. By the year 2000, one in five people in developed countries will be over 60, according to United Nations statistics. By 2025, that figure will rise to one in four. In France, for example, older consumers will be demanding healthier foods. French seniors are becoming as quick as the younger generation in adapting new food products such as low-fat yogurt & convenience foods. **Contact: Lynn K. Goldsbrough (202) 382-9442.**

HERBICIDES LEND A HAND -- Some herbicides fight weeds in crops by causing the weeds to overdose on their own natural chemicals, says USDA Chemist **Stephen O. Duke**. Duke's discovery is that diphenyl ether herbicides, which are used on a variety of crops, including soybeans, cotton & peanuts, disrupt the weed's production of chlorophyll. When the herbicide is applied, the weed builds up a natural compound normally used to make chlorophyll. This compound absorbs light & interacts with oxygen to produce a form of toxic oxygen that destroys the weed cell membranes. **Contact: Stephen O. Duke (601) 686-2311.**

SMALL FARM TIPS -- The latest issue of "Small-Scale Agriculture Today" includes lots of tips for small-scale farmers. Some of the tips are: mulch soil to conserve moisture & control weeds; to help condition livestock, put the feed on one end of the paddock & the water on the opposite end so the animals have to walk between the two; and clean all purchased used farm equipment or seeds before using. Want a copy? **Contact: Howard "Bud" Kerr (202) 401-4640.**

FARMER TO FARMER -- Know someone who might be interested in hosting an Egyptian farmer on the farm for four weeks? The Agricultural Cooperative Development International will provide each farm family \$20 a day to help cover the cost of hosting a visitor. **Contact: Linda Schmid (202) 638-4611.**

SEX LEADS TO UNDOING FOR MOTH -- Cranberry growers are using a sex lure as part of an integrated pest management program aimed at cutting pesticide use. Growers use the lure to trap cranberry girdler moths to determine whether they'll need to use insecticides. The trap consists of a small red rubber plug impregnated with a synthetic version of the female's pheromone. The plug is suspended over a sticky trap. Males try to mate with the plug and become trapped when they fall in the trap's "stickum." **Contact: James Kamm (503) 757-4365.**

FAR EAST MARKETS HOLD PROMISE -- U.S. ag exporters should look to the Far East for the best sales prospects, says **Mike Dwyer**, a USDA trade expert. Dwyer says the best overseas markets for U.S. ag during the next three to five years are Taiwan, Japan, South Korea & Hong Kong. Other Far East nations near the top of Dwyer's list are China, Singapore, Pakistan, Thailand & Malaysia. Dwyer used a model that ranks 75 countries on the basis of their market potential for a broad range of U.S. farm & food products. **Contact: Lynn K. Goldsbrough (202) 382-9442.**

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1754 -- If you're tired of working for someone else, you might want to consider starting a home-based business. On this edition of **Agriculture USA**, **Brenda Curtis** reports on issues that must be addressed before starting such a venture. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1235 -- 1991 retail citrus prices vary; loss of U.S. farms likely to slow; home-based businesses; replacing your windows; preventing foodborne illnesses. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1743 -- USDA News Highlights; planting flexibility details; 1991 U.S. winter wheat crop; wheat prospects; a new export forecast. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1403 -- Bio-availability of nutrients; nutrient interactions; human cell cultures; diet & body composition; natural weight maintenance. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Fri., Jan. 25, cattle on feed, livestock slaughter, livestock & poultry update, national food review; Tues., Jan. 29, eggs, chickens & turkeys, layers & egg production; Wed., Jan. 30, peanut stocks & processing; Thurs., Jan. 31, ag prices; Fri., Feb. 1, egg products, poultry slaughter, catfish production.

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.
Material changed at 5 p.m., EST, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE
(Week of Jan.. 17, 19 & 21, 1991)

FEATURES -- Pat O'Leary reports on the 1991 USDA farm financial forecast; Debora Janifer reports on winter plant care.

ACTUALITIES -- Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter speaks to reporters in Washington about GATT & other issues; Norton Strommen, USDA meteorologist, with a crop & weather update; USDA Economist Bob McElroy on USDA's farm costs survey; USDA Economist Kate Buckley on the citrus fruit situation; USDA World Agricultural Outlook Board Chairman James Donald on crop production.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- Lynn Wyvill on sending food to the troops; Pat O'Leary on environmental provisions of the 1990 Farm Bill; Will Pemble on putting seeds to sleep.

Available on Satellite Westar IV, Transponder 12D (Channel 23), audio 6.2 or 6.8:

THURSDAY 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EST
SATURDAY 10 - 10:45 a.m., EST
MONDAY 8 - 8:45 a.m., EST

OFFMIKE

APPLICATION OF THE FARM BILL...to everyday operations is of major interest to producers in west central Minnesota, says **Paul Weyrens** (KBRF, Fergus Falls). In the "Land of 1,000 Lakes" the new wetlands provisions will likely affect operations. Farmers want to know how to make the rules work. On Feb. 6, Paul will be broadcasting at the annual Crop & Forage Show in Fergus Falls covering award winners, new products & speakers.

FOUR-STATE MEETING...the KMOA 1991 Beef Conference, is being held by the Extension Service in Joplin, Mo., in mid-January. **Hugh Robinson** (KKOW, Pittsburg, Kan.) is serving as moderator. He says local cattle producers are happy and optimistic about 1991.

OUTSTANDING YEAR...was registered by most tobacco producers in 1990, reports **David Spatola** (WNCT, Greenville, N.C.). Quotas are the same this year and, if weather holds, 1991 also looks good.

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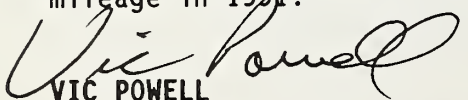
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PREPARATIONS FOR FIELD WORK...are getting underway in Mississippi, says **Douglas Thomas** (Progressive Farmer Network, Starkville). Corn will be planted in early March. The network is conducting an ag seminar in February regarding the new farm bill. Doug says understanding planting flexibility is on the minds of most producers. Cotton and soybean acreage is expected to be larger in response to the farm bill.

THE WEST...is big country and **Evan Slack** (Evan Slack Network, Denver, Colo.) says he flew 60,000 miles in his aircraft covering the region last year. The spirits of beef producers, he reports, are upbeat. Evan plans to cover the National Cattlemen's Association meeting in Dallas this month, and speak at the Eastern Oregon Ag Show, January 25-26 in Ontario, Ore., getting a good start on mileage in 1991.


VIC POWELL
Chief, Radio & TV Division